

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3007

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0925

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS AS ACTION NIACT IMMEDIATE TO SECDEF WASHDC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, US, SO

SUBJECT: SOVIET BASE ISSUE: CONGRESSIONAL VISITS

REF: A STATE 153485 B. STATE 153511 C. MOGADISCIO 0922

1. SOMALI GOVT STATEMENT WARNING THAT INVITATIONS TO BERBERA DO NOT RPT NOT REQUIRE SOMALIA TO SHOW ITS NAVAL ARMAMENTS (I.E., MISSILE STORAGE AND HANDLING FACILITY) EVIDENTLY MARKS END TO ANY PRETEXT THAT VISITORS TO BERBERA WILL SEE ALL THEY WANT TO SEE (MOGADISCIO 922). THIS IS RETREAT FROM OMAR ARTEH INVITATION TO FOREIGN OBSERVERS TO VISIT BERBERA WITHOUT RESTRICTION. IT ALSO HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR US CONGRESSIONAL VISITS.

2. NEW GROUND RULES WERE FORCED UPON SOMALI OFFICIALS BY WESTERN PRESS CORPS WHO ON JUNE 28 RESISTED THE QUICK HUSTLE AND SLEIGHT-OF-HAND WHICH WORKED SO WELL WITH FIRST TWO DELEGATIONS OF NEWSMEN. SOMALI PREMISE IN EXTENDING INVITATIONS IS CLEARLY DEFINED IN RADIO MOGADISCIO COMMENTARY OF JUNE 29 (FBIS LONDON 291726Z JUNE 75) CLAIMING THAT QTE MILITARY BASE OF SUCH SIZE AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AS ALLEGED BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN HIDDEN UNQTE. OBSERVERS WHO SUPPORT THIS PREMISE IN THEIR VISITS TO BERBERA AND REQUIRE ONLY BROAD OVERVIEW TO CONFIRM IT ARE WELCOME. THOSE WHO DO NOT AND WHO PUSH FOR QUALITATIVE INSPECTION ARE SPIES.

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3. BUT SOMALI PREMISE IS FALSE, SINCE SIZE ITSELF IS NOT MAIN ISSUE AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE CANNOT BE ESTABLISHED BY ON-SITE INSPECTION. SOMALI GOVT IS WELL AWARE OF EQUALLY IMPORTANT ISSUE, WHICH IT DEFINED BOTH IN GSDR NOTE OF PROTEST (MOGADISCIO 821) AND IN AMBASSADOR ADDOU'S LETTER OF INVITATION TO US CONGRESSMEN WHEN HE CLAIMS THAT SOMALI GOVT QTE WOULD NEVER ALLOW ITS SOIL TO BE USED BY FOREIGN POWER FOR THE STORAGE OR DEPLOYMENT OF MEANS OF DESTRUCTION THAT WOULD CAUSE TENSION IN THE REGION OR DISTURB INTERNATIONAL TRANQUILITY UNQTE.

4. WITH MISSILE FACILITY NOW APPARENTLY OFF-LIMITS, THIS CLAIM WILL NOT RPT NOT BE ANSWERED BY ANY INSPECTION OF BERBERA UNDER NEW GROUND RULES AND OBSERVERS WHO INSIST ON QUALITATIVE EXAMINATION OF EXISTING FACILITIES WILL NOT ONLY BE DENIED FULL ACCESS, AS WESTERN NEWSMEN WERE DENIED COMPLETE ACCESS ON JUNE 28, BUT THEIR MOTIVES IN COMING TO SOMALIA WILL BE IMH GNED.

5. WE DO NOT RPT NOT KNOW HOW THOSE NEWSMEN WILL REPORT THEIR BERBERA OBSERVATIONS BUT IF, ON BASIS OF THEIR REPORTING, IT IS CLEAR IN THEIR EYES THAT SOMALI GOVT IS GUILTY OF CONCEALMENT -- EVEN IF IDENTITY OF FACILITY BEING CONCEALED IS NOT RPT NOT FULLY KNOWN -- THEN ESSENTIAL POINT HAS BEEN MADE. WE DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE VISITS OF OTHER DELEGATIONS WILL BE ABLE TO IMPROVE UPON THOSE DOUBTS.

6. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, WE MAY WISH CONSIDER ASKING GSDR MORE PRECISELY WHAT LIMITATIONS ON CONGRESSIONAL ACCESS WILL BE AT BERBERA. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE SPOKESMAN ACCEPTED INVITATION ON BASIS THAT CONGRESSMEN WOULD BE PERMITTED UNRESTRICTED ACCESS TO BERBERA FACILITIES. WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD CLEARLY ESTABLISH LIMITATIONS NOW, RATHER THAN FACE PROSPECT THAT CONGRESSIONAL GROUP, AND ACCOMPANYING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICIALS, WILL NOT ONLY BE DENIED ACCESS GUARANTEED THEM IN WASHINGTON BY AMBASSADOR ADDOU, BUT ACCUSED OF CHICANCERY AS WELL.
HAMRICK

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECDEF.
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